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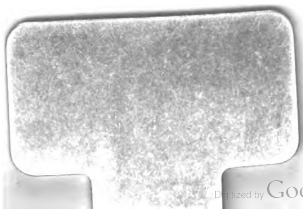


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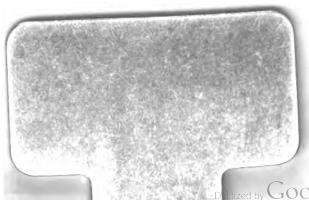


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THE CHILD'S MONTH OF MARY.

"MONSTRA TE ESSE MATREM."

"SHOW THYSELF A MOTHER."



LONDON :

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Westm. Ap. 14, 1851.

N. Card. Archbp.

TO THE
Immaculate Heart of Mary,
AS A TRIBUTE
OF LOVE AND GRATITUDE
THIS TRANSLATION
IS HUMBLY DEDICATED,
BY
AN UNWORTHY CHILD OF MARY.

**MAY YOUR IMMACULATE HEART,
O MARY,
BE PRAISED, BLESSED, HONOURED, LOVED,
IMITATED,
THROUGHOUT THE WHOLE WORLD.**

NOTICE

RESPECTING THE MONTH OF MARY.

In consequence of all that has been said of late years touching this delightful practice of devotion, it has been thought advisable by a servant of Mary, to write a short notice upon the subject, with a view of causing so lovely an exercise of piety to be known and adopted, as much as possible, by every christian family.

ESTABLISHMENT OF THIS DEVOTION.

It was in Italy that it originated. The intention proposed in establishing it, was to divert the minds of the people, in a salutary manner, from the amusements and the dangerous festivities connected with the return of Spring, and of which pastimes, especially in Italy, the lower orders have ever shown themselves immoderately fond. The success of this design has surpassed all expectation. Dissipation has given way to piety; the exercises of a devotion, replete with

charms, have consigned to oblivion those diversions of which the consequences are, in general, disorder and licentiousness.

During this month, the whole of Italy resounds with the praises of Mary. It is impossible to form an idea of the joy, the fervour, and a certain indescribable spiritual satisfaction and peace with which the countenance of every child of Mary is radiant during this delightful season.

From Italy the practice of the "Month of Mary" passed into France towards the end of the last century. It was received with an eagerness and an enthusiasm difficult to express. Belgium declared itself later in favour of this pious movement of the devout servants of Mary. The political events which took place in France after the introduction of the "Month of Mary," most probably prevented its being more quickly made known to that truly Catholic country. The joyful sounds of the praises of Mary have, at length, found an echo, during this beauteous month, even in this our Protestant land. The devotion becomes, every succeeding year, more widely known and appreciated; let us hope it will shortly be propagated amongst us, in an extraordinary and consoling manner. And you,

my dear reader, who peruse this short notice, whoever you may be, make it your glory and your pride to assist in establishing the "Month of Mary" in all christian families. Your reward will be great, I trust, and you will enjoy the precious blessing of peace at the hour of death.

**MANNER OF PERFORMING THE
MONTH OF MARY.**

Select the most appropriate place in your house—raise therein a small altar, and place upon it the statue or picture of the Blessed Virgin; ornament the altar in the best manner you are able; surround it with shrubs, flowers, objects of piety, &c. Assemble all the members of your family and household, together with some neighbours or friends, who, like yourself, are animated with devotional sentiments towards the Blessed Virgin. Recite, in common, every day during the month, some prayers in her honour, such as the Litany, or the Beads; and read a chapter out of some one of the many pious works composed to the glory of Mary. At the commencement of the "Month of Mary," propose to yourself some particular inten-

8 APPEAL TO THE SERVANTS OF MARY.

tion, and renew it daily before you begin the prayers. What a ravishing sight to behold a great number of houses converted thus, into so many little oratories, chapels, and sanctuaries, during the most lovely month of the year! Oh what an innocent, delightful, and edifying practice is that of the "Month of Mary!"

May he who writes these lines, see it solidly established!.....He will then die in peace.

APPEAL TO THE SERVANTS OF MARY.

Ministers of the Lord, religious men and women, christians of both sexes, who have been blessed with devotion to the Blessed Virgin, permit one of her servants, who owes his happiness to her, to exhort you to extend, as much as in you lies, the practice of the "Month of Mary;" and begin with your own families, if, up to this time, you have deferred to do so. Saint Bonaventura affirms, that they who are careful to publish her praises, may rest assured of paradise.

Children of Mary, give honour and love to your Mother.

Month of Mary.

FOR THE EVE OF THE FIRST OF MAY.

Prayer.

O Mary, I offer Thee my heart ; bless it, and so dispose it that I may sanctify each day of the month which is dedicated to Thee. Young as I am, I have already offended Jesus, thy divine Son. I have grieved Thee by my defects ; my disobedience, my negligence in the performance of my duties, and in the service of God. I am sincerely sorry for all these offences : I repent of all my faults ; and prostrate before Thee, my dear Mother, I make a firm resolution to flee from sin, which is the greatest of all evils ; and to practise virtue.

Reflection.

Mary is the greatest, the most beautiful, the most perfect model of perfection a simple creature can present us with.

She is also the most tender of Mothers ; the most sensible of our wants, the most capable of assisting us therein. She has a particular affection for children who honour her, who love her, and who place themselves under her protection.

Example.

Our Divine Saviour, the amiable Jesus, always had the most ardent affection for Mary, His beloved Mother. While yet enveloped in swaddling clothes, and lying in the stable of Bethlehem, He was the joy and delight of His holy Mother. She embraced and fondled Him with maternal tenderness ; her whole happiness consisted in the contemplation of this adorable Infant, who filled her heart with inexpressible felicity.

Let us imitate the child Jesus, if we wish to render ourselves agreeable to Mary, and to draw down upon us her blessing and her favours.

Practice. Frequently invoke Mary, by the recital of the *Ave Maria*.

Ejaculatory Prayer. Holy Mary, pray for us.

FIRST DAY.

HAPPINESS OF SERVING GOD FROM CHILDHOOD.

Reflection.

By giving ourselves early to God, we prepare for ourselves a life abounding with consolation, and rich in merit; we are also spared the bitter regret caused by sin, and by the loss of the most valuable portion of our existence.

The pious child is the favourite of heaven; he is blessed of God; he is the friend of Jesus; he is protected by Mary. His heart resembles a lovely garden, in which the most beautiful flowers, those of virtue, grow, develope themselves gradually, and are matured.

Prayer.

O Mary, Virgin conceived without sin! I offer thee the first years of my life, and the whole period of my existence in this world. My soul has been purified by the Sacrament of Baptism; take it under thy protection; help me to preserve without stain the robe of innocence I then received; but should I have the misfortune to

offend my God, obtain for me grace to reconcile myself to Him without delay.

Example.

Blessed Alphonsus Rodriguez evinced, from his earliest infancy, the most tender devotion towards Mary. Whenever he met with one of her images, he seized it eagerly and kissed it with devotion. If he perceived in a painting, the representation of her whom he considered as his loving Mother, he fixed his eyes tenderly upon her, he addressed her with expressions of the most filial confidence. He was only four years old, when he repeated, with the charming simplicity of childhood, O Mary! if you only knew how much I love you!

Practice. Accustom yourself to perform daily some particular act of virtue.

Ejaculatory Prayer. Mother of divine grace, pray for us.

SECOND DAY.

ENORMITY OF SIN.

Reflection.

Sin is a hideous monster, the bearer of corruption and death. Flee from sin as

you would flee from a mad and furious animal.

He who commits sin, abandons his soul to the devil, and prepares for himself eternal torments unless he does penance.

Would you eat a fruit, however delicious it might appear, if you were certain it would poison you? Would you, to quench your thirst, drink of a liquid that would cause your death? Oh! my child, sin produces evils as great and greater still than these. When you are tempted, or exposed to danger, cry out immediately: "O Mary! O Mary! come to my assistance! Do not allow your child to perish."

Example.

Young Decalogne, who deservedly obtained the name of "The Virtuous Scholar," while running, one day, across a garden, fell into a dry, but very deep well. When he was drawn out, every one supposed he must be dangerously hurt; but to the great astonishment of all present, he appeared full of life and health, and ran immediately to throw himself into the arms of his mother. "It is to the Blessed Virgin," he said afterwards, "It is to the Blessed Virgin

that I owe this happiness ; she would not allow me to perish at a time when I had not begun to love God."

And do you also, my dear child, call Mary to your help in all dangers, more especially those of your soul. Your mother hastens towards you whenever she hears from you a cry of distress ; in like manner, Mary, who is also your Mother, will not leave you without assistance in the perils which surround you.

Practice. Avoid the occasions of offending God, and in all dangers have recourse to Mary.

Ejaculatory Prayer. Mother most pure, pray for us.

THIRD DAY.

PRACTICE OF VIRTUE.

Reflection.

When you wish, at certain periods of the year, to testify to your parents your love and gratitude, you offer flowers as a proof of your affectionate sentiments, or some object, the produce of your industry and ingenuity, which you fancy may be agreeable to them. Come then, during this beautiful month, con-

secrated to Mary, and present her also with a sweet and lovely nosegay, composed of the roses of piety, and the lily of innocence. Add thereto the flowers of those virtues which should especially adorn your early years: modesty, docility, meekness, love of useful occupation. Then will Mary shed new gifts upon you, then will she imprint upon your forehead and in your heart, the precious character of fidelity and perseverance.

Example.

Saint Aloysius, the special protector of youth, evinced, like all the Saints, the most tender devotion towards Mary. When only six years of age, it was his custom, as he mounted the stairs of his father's palace, to salute the Queen of Virgins, addressing her in the words of the angel: "Hail Mary." From that time he endeavoured to imitate her virtues, and he afterwards attained a high degree of sanctity.

Practice. Perform some act of the virtue which appears the most difficult to you.

Ejaculatory Prayer. Most amiable Mother, pray for us.

FOURTH DAY.

Prayer.

You are only a child, and have neither reputation, nor renown ; the world, for the most part, is ignorant of your existence and bestows no attention upon you. Nevertheless in prayer, you present yourself before God Himself, you speak to and converse with Him ; and God, so great, so powerful, deigns to look upon you ; He listens to you ; He likes to hear you ; He is pleased to grant your petitions.

Ah ! my dear child, pray then with faith, with respect, with attention, with confidence, with all the love of which a young heart is capable.

Beg of Mary to obtain for you a fervent soul and pure lips. Address yourself to Mary in all your wants, in all your sorrows ; she is the Mother of the Creator of the world ; she is the Mother of the Saviour of mankind ; she is, at the same time, the Mother of the poor little child who has recourse to her.

Example.

John Olier, when a child, had recourse

to Mary under all circumstances. When he received new clothes, he repaired to the Church of our Lady, and presenting himself before Mary, begged of her to obtain for him that, during the whole time he wore them, he might not have the misfortune of offending her Divine Son. He offered to her, in the same manner, his books, and everything he had for his own use, and he never performed any action without having first implored the blessing of his holy Mother.

Practice. Be careful never to omit your morning and night prayers—and while conversing with God often recal to mind His holy presence.

Ejaculatory Prayer. Mother of our Creator, pray for us.

FIFTH DAY.

THE HOLY SACRIFICE OF THE MASS.

You would have been deeply affected, and you would have wept bitterly, had you stood with Mary at the foot of the Cross, when her beloved Son hung bleeding and suspended thereon. The holy sacrifice of the Mass, my child, is the continuation of the sacrifice of the Cross: endeavour therefore to assist at it with

the sentiments with which the heart of Mary was filled, when Jesus consummated His sacrifice.

It is a great grace to be permitted to assist at Mass ; and a great happiness to assist thereat with devotion. You are still very young, and yet how often have you not already enjoyed this favour ? Have you ever thought of this ? Have you ever expressed your gratitude to God for it ? My child, never let us be ungrateful towards the best of masters and the most tender of fathers.

Example.

Young Berchmans, a pious servant of Mary, had a particular favour to solicit from the Blessed Virgin. In order to render himself agreeable to her, he set aside, for some time, the different sums he received from his parents as pocket money. Then distributing a portion of his little hoard to the poor, he employed the rest in causing Masses to be celebrated in the chapel of the Blessed Virgin, himself assisting thereat with angelical fervour. Mary obtained for him the favour he so ardently desired ;

and he gratefully acknowledged her kindness during the remainder of his life.

Practice. Assist at the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass on Sundays and holydays with the greatest possible devotion ; and on week days, as often as you are able.

Ejaculatory Prayer. Mother of our Redeemer, pray for us.

SIXTH DAY.

HAPPINESS OF SERVING AT MASS.

The example of Mary, lavishing her care upon her Divine Son, and rendering Him every service which her maternal love could suggest, has frequently been presented to you. When you serve at Mass, my child, you approach Jesus who is present on the altar ; and you act, towards Him, the part of a little servant whom He loves, and whom He has chosen for Himself. How glorious to fill so honourable a post ! Endeavour as often as this happiness is yours, to enter into the sentiments of love and respect which animated the immaculate heart of the holy Mother of God.

Children are generally allowed the privilege of serving at mass, because

Jesus loves them with peculiar tenderness and predilection; and because their heart being innocent and pure, they are like angels surrounding the sacred altar of God. Do you make every effort to preserve this precious innocence which is so agreeable to the Almighty?

Example.

Young Albini loved to be able to serve at Mass, and he did so, with so much modesty, fervour and respect, that his example inspired all present with the same holy feelings of devotion. Elderly and venerable persons have owned that the mere sight of this child at the altar, excited them to piety; and that when looking at him, they represented to themselves an angel sent from heaven to assist at the holy Sacrifice.

Practice. Consider the privilege of serving at Mass as a great happiness, and acquit yourself of this holy function with all the piety of which you are capable.

Ejaculatory Prayer. Most pure Virgin, pray for us.

SEVENTH DAY.

STUDY.

Education is one of the greatest blessings a child can receive. A good education is of more value than riches and treasures. He who employs usefully the period of his studies, prepares for himself a happy and useful manhood and old age. * Read, write, study to please God, and your good Mother, the blessed Virgin Mary. Offer to her in a special manner your studies during this month, which is consecrated to her; offer to her the little difficulties you have to overcome, and whatever rewards you may obtain. Think to yourself that she is looking at you, that she encourages you; by this means you will acquire energy, ardour and facility, while, at the same time, you will amass a treasure of merits that will be most agreeable to the august Protectress of youth.

Example.

Alexander Bercius, was only seven years of age when he was sent to college.

In the performance of his little duties, he only sought to please Jesus and Mary. The purity and simplicity of the motives which animated this pious child in the pursuit of his studies, drew down upon him great favours from heaven. Those who have written his life, assure us that the Blessed Virgin often honoured him with her visit, while he was studying, and that she instructed him as a master instructs his pupils.

Practice. Often call to mind the presence of God during study-time.

Ejaculatory Prayer. Most prudent Virgin, pray for us.

EIGHTH DAY.

LOVE OF OCCUPATION.

Man is born to labour ; idleness is the parent of vice. These are two truths upon which you ought to meditate from your childhood. Perhaps, young as you are, you are obliged to labour in the sweat of your brow in order to gain a livelihood. Perhaps also the care of your parents alone is sufficient for your subsistence. In either case, bless God for all His benefits, and never listen to

the voice of idleness and indolence. Do not work only when your master or your father is watching you ; but remember that Mary has her eye upon you, and that in order to prove yourself the worthy son of so holy a mother, you should never give way to negligence or a distaste for the duties of your state of life.

Example.

Contemplate, my son, the divine child Jesus in the house of Nazareth. Mary was poor ; Joseph was a simple artizan. Although both were of the royal race of David, they were compelled to live by the labour of their hands. As soon as Jesus Himself was old enough to work, He helped His foster-father as much as He could, and the divine hands of our amiable Saviour busied themselves frequently with the rough tools of a carpenter.

Practice. Unite your occupations with those of the child Jesus.

Ejaculatory Prayer. Most faithful Virgin, pray for us.

NINTH DAY.

RECREATION.

A certain portion of time is daily allotted to you for your amusement, by way of recreating both your body and your mind ; enjoy yourself during this period with that calm and peaceful joy which is the fruit of a tranquil conscience. At play, as in every other action of your life, show yourself a true child of Mary ; the enemy of quarrelling, evil discourse, and excessive or riotous mirth.

Let your conduct inspire the love of virtue, and that of devotion to your good Mother, by showing yourself constantly good, cordial, obliging towards your companions. Your very games will thus afford you an opportunity of doing good and of gaining souls to God, whereas they are but too frequently a source of disorder and sin.

Example.

Devotion to the Blessed Virgin was strenuously cultivated in a certain school.

The young people vied with each other in the zeal and love with which they endeavoured to testify their veneration for their celestial protectress.

When the season of flowers arrived, they arranged in their play-ground a pretty flower-bed, on which they formed with plants, in verdant letters, the words of the litany: "Mary, Cause of our joy." Thus did the Blessed Virgin preside over their innocent amusements, and whenever they happened to look upon these touching words, a pious thought immediately elevated their hearts towards the Queen of Angels.

Practice. Deprive yourself of some little recreation in honour of Mary.

Ejaculatory Prayer. Cause of our joy, Pray for us.

TENTH DAY.

MEALS.

Whether you eat or drink, do all for the glory of God.

Jesus, Mary, and Joseph lived in the midst of privation, and in the most abstemious manner. Perhaps Divine Providence has placed you in the midst of

abundance. In this case, often think of your holy models, in order that you may restrain every inclination to greediness. Perhaps you have only what is strictly necessary in the way of food. Rejoice, if so, that you are in the same condition here below as Jesus and Mary. Represent to yourself sometimes that you are taking your repast in company with the Holy Family, and receive your food from the hand of your mother as if it were Mary herself offering it to you.

Example.

Blessed Herman, who was surnamed Joseph on account of his devotion to Mary, frequently took pleasure, when a child, in conversing with the Blessed Virgin and her Divine Son before a picture, in which she is represented with Jesus in her arms. He offered her the nice things that were given him, and he begged of her to request Jesus to accept them. Whenever he spoke to Mary, he always addressed her by the title of his good Mother.

Practice. Deprive yourself during the month of Mary of something you would like to eat.

Ejaculatory Prayer. Spiritual vessel, pray for us.

ELEVENTH DAY.

THE SACRAMENT OF PENANCE.

The admirable purity of the heart of Mary was never sullied by the least stain.

She was conceived without sin, and her soul was constantly embellished by the practice of every virtue. As for us, my child, we offend our Lord from our earliest years, and scarcely do we attain the use of reason ere we forget the innumerable blessings of our God. Let us at least repair our faults and our ingratitude, by approaching the sacrament of penance, in which the goodness of God offers us pardon and forgiveness. Let us examine our conscience with care, confess our sins with sincerity, and detest them as the greatest of all evils. Let us also, under the auspices of Mary, make firm resolutions to avoid for the future everything likely to offend her Divine Son.

Example.

John Danmond avoided during the evening and morning which preceded his confession, everything capable of disturb-

ing in him the spirit of interior recollection, and prepared himself seriously for the great action he was about to perform. He then placed himself on his knees close to the sacred tribunal, and with sorrow depicted on his countenance, and his soul penetrated with fear and confidence, he awaited with humility the moment for presenting himself to the minister of Jesus Christ. On leaving the Confessional, he observed the same recollection, and his very exterior long retained marks of the holy impression which this sacrament had made upon his soul.

Practice. Examine your conscience every evening, and approach with regularity the tribunal of penance.

Ejaculatory Prayer. Mirror of Justice, pray for us.

TWELFTH DAY.

THE HOLY COMMUNION.

Has the great day, the one supereminently lovely, already dawned for you? Ah, my child, if you have not as yet had the happiness of making your First Communion, hasten the blissful moment by the fervour of your desires; and above all, labour to render yourself

worthy of the favour by increasing daily in wisdom and virtue.

If you have already been admitted to the celestial banquet, give thanks to God, and let it be your greatest happiness to prepare your heart for Jesus, that He may come and inhabit therein anew. How great must have been the felicity of the Blessed Virgin in living so many years constantly with Jesus. Well, my dear child, this happiness is offered to yourself. This same Jesus is present in the Blessed Eucharist; He is hidden under the humble appearance of bread by way of inducing you more tenderly to come and receive Him.

O Mary, I entreat of you, obtain that my heart may be enriched with those holy dispositions which animated yours, so that when Jesus comes to visit me, He may find therein an agreeable abode.

Example.

"I never," said young Decalogne, of whom we have already spoken, "spent more delightful moments than on the day of my First Communion. My joy was so great that I could not speak a single word; and my tears were so abundant that I found it impossible to repeat

the acts I had learnt; but these were tears of joy, and such as I would gladly shed all my life. It then appeared to me that I heard the voice of my God in the midst of my heart, and that He said to me: 'Well, now, my son, behold I have satisfied your longing desires, by giving Myself to you; will you then promise me that you will never consent to sin?' And I answered: 'Yes, indeed, Lord, I love you, and will always love you, without measure, and with my whole heart.' "

Practice. Prepare yourself to communicate at least once during the month of Mary.

Ejaculatory Prayer. Ark of the Covenant, pray for us.

THIRTEENTH DAY.

DUTIES TOWARDS PARENTS.

God has given us an express commandment to honour our father and our mother. The sentiments implanted in our nature impose this law upon us, and our Lord has still more strongly enforced it by recommending it to us Himself. Mary, during her infancy, lived with St. Joachim and St. Anne, in the practice of the most perfect submission; beg of her,

my child, to obtain for you grace to imitate her in this. Accustom yourself to obey God when obeying your father and your mother. A docile child draws down benedictions upon his family ; a rebellious child is often the cause of disturbances and dissensions. The only case in which you do not owe obedience to your parents, is when you are commanded to do something contrary to the law of God. But you must always pray for them, assist them in their wants and necessities, and render them every service becoming a tender and respectful child.

Example.

Let us return to the holy house of Nazareth, and contemplate anew the divine child Jesus. He was the Master of heaven and earth, of all its treasures, of all its riches, of all its grandeur, yet the gospel relates the account of the whole period of time He spent with Mary and Joseph in these words:—He was subject to them.

Practice. Accustom yourself to obey promptly, and without any observation.

Ejaculatory Prayer. Gate of heaven, pray for us.

FOURTEENTH DAY.

THE AFFLICTIONS OF THIS LIFE.

You, perhaps, as yet, know nothing, my dear child, of the sorrows of life ; but if God prolong your days upon earth, you will not fail to gain this experience. Not a day passes in which one does not experience some contradiction, in which the heart has not something to suffer. To-day you are the object of the love and tender solicitude of your parents ; to-morrow, perchance, will behold you an orphan. You yourself enjoy robust health, and to-morrow, perhaps, you will be a prey to illness and sufferings. Learn then early, my dear child, to submit to the will of your heavenly Father. Mary herself, who was elevated in dignity above the angels, was exposed to the sharpest trials, and had her soul pierced through with a sword of sorrow. Endeavour to form yourself upon so good a model, that you may learn how to suffer.

Example.

When St. Teresa had the misfortune to lose her mother, she went, bathed in

tears, and prostrated herself before an image of the Blessed Virgin ; there she besought the Queen of sorrows to act as a mother towards her, to adopt her as a child, and to bestow upon her powerful aid and protection.

Practice. Be careful never to murmur under the vexations you meet with in life.

Ejaculatory Prayer. Seat of wisdom, pray for us.

FIFTEENTH DAY.

TEMPTATIONS.

We have now arrived, my dear child, at the middle of the beautiful month of Mary. Well ! are we more docile, more pious, more faithful to our duties than we were at the beginning? Have we not resisted, by our evil inclinations, the abundant graces that Mary had drawn down upon us? Have we not listened to the perfidious counsels of the spirit of darkness, in preference to the sweet and amiable voice of our good Mother? The devil prowls around you, seeking to devour you, my child; he is jealous of your innocence, and of your wish to belong to God. As the lamb, threatened

by the wolf, finds a secure shelter near the shepherd, who watches in its defence, so do you take shelter and refuge in the bosom of Mary; she will protect you against every attack, she will defend you against every snare, she will obtain for you a complete victory over your enemies.

Example.

Saint Francis of Sales, while pursuing his studies, was assailed by so violent a temptation of despair, that his health was even affected by it, and he was becoming fearfully thin. He did not know what remedy to apply in order to surmount it; when one day, on entering a church in Paris, he happened to cast his eyes upon a picture of the Blessed Virgin. This sight produced upon him an inexpressible effect; confidence sprung up anew in his heart; his eyes filled with tears; he prayed with an abundance of pious feelings, such as he was no longer accustomed to experience; and when he withdrew, the most delightful calm had replaced his former agitation and disquietude.

Practice.—Have recourse to Mary in your temptations.

Ejaculatory Prayer.—Tower of ivory,
pray for us.

SIXTEENTH DAY.

ON BAD COMPANY.

Good fruit placed amongst that which is spoiled or rotten, will itself quickly decay. Thus will it be with you, my child, if you frequent vicious companies. You would flee from an assassin who sought to wound you with a knife, or a dagger. How then, can you derive any pleasure from the society of a person who is the enemy of God, and your eternal salvation? The injury which so miserable an associate will effect in your soul, the cruel death he will inflict, are evils infinitely more deplorable than the severest wounds upon the body.

Should, then, any one endeavour to entice you into evil society, flee like Jesus, Mary, and Joseph, when they withdrew into Egypt, to avoid the pursuit of Herod.

Let all your efforts tend solely to one point—that of preserving the friendship of Jesus, of the angels, and saints.

Example.

A good and virtuous young man was going one Sunday to church, when he was met by some wicked companions, who ridiculed his conduct, and tried to induce him to accompany them. He resisted for some time, but at length weakly yielded to their importunity. He followed these wicked wretches, who styled themselves his friends; imitated them in their crimes, committed an enormous sin, and was that very moment punished by death. This dreadful chastisement struck terror into the hearts of his cruel and unworthy companions. It ought to teach us, my child, how important it is to be constantly on our guard, lest we also expose ourselves to eternal perdition.

Practice.—Make choice of a truly virtuous friend.

Ejaculatory Prayer.—Tower of David, pray for us.

SEVENTEENTH DAY.**BAD CONVERSATIONS.**

From the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaketh. Impure lips denote a

corrupt heart. Never listen to the discourse of persons who have neither religion nor virtue, unless you wish to expose yourself to the misfortune of becoming like unto them. A child of Mary should, in the course of conversation, frequently imagine himself in company with the Holy Family, and never utter a word which he would be ashamed to say in the presence of Jesus and His holy Mother.

Example.

Saint Bernardin of Sienna resembled an angel in his exterior; his devotion to the Blessed Virgin was extremely great; he had recourse to her protection under every emergency. During the period of his studies, his modesty acted as a restraint upon the bad conversations of his companions. They never dared, in his presence, to violate the laws of decorum and of religion. All wicked discourse ceased as soon as he appeared; "silence," exclaimed his comrades—"Bernardin is coming."

Practice.—Be guarded in your conversation, and ever remember, that in the Holy Communion, your mouth has been sanctified by the presence of Jesus.

Ejaculatory Prayer.—Morning Star,
pray for us.

EIGHTEENTH DAY.

ON GOOD AND BAD BOOKS.

Reading is the food of the soul; if it be good, it nourishes and fortifies the soul; if bad, it poisons and kills the soul. It is an advantageous thing to know how to read; but if you make use of the instruction you have received, to read books in which religion and morality are not respected, it would be preferable for you to have remained ignorant.

O Mary, here at your feet, I make a firm resolution never to grieve your maternal heart, by reading bad books; but, on the contrary, to confine myself to such as will form my mind and heart to the practice of those virtues of which you have set me the example.

Example.

A young man who had been well brought up, had the misfortune to read some bad books. One day, as he was travelling by sea, in company with a worthy priest, he was loudly extolling a bad

book which he had in his possession. The good priest, moved with compassion, spoke to this prodigal child, with all the authority derived from his age, and his dignity as minister of God; he spoke to him in such strong and moving terms, that the young man was overcome. Have recourse to the Blessed Virgin, said the old man, as he finished his discourse. Alas! replied the young man, I loved her so much formerly in the college in which I was educated, I was so strongly recommended to be faithful to her. "Do you wish to regain the friendship of Mary?" "Yes, I wish it with all my heart." "Well, then, offer to her the sacrifice of the book, which is so dear to you." The young man immediately divided the book into two parts, and they each threw one of the portions into the sea. This action was agreeable to the Queen of Angels, for the young man received abundant graces, and lived ever afterwards in a very edifying manner.

Practice.—Read every day a small portion of some pious book.

Ejaculatory Prayer.—Ark of the Covenant, pray for us.

NINETEENTH DAY.

EXAMPLE.

Death is the chastisement reserved for those unfaithful subjects who excite others to rebel against the king. What fate, then, ought that child to expect who seeks, by his bad example, to augment the number of the enemies of God? He, on the contrary, who, by his virtuous conduct, excites others to do good is like an angel on earth, and renders himself particularly agreeable to Jesus and to His Holy Mother.

Example.

Young Augustus L——, who died in 1829, distinguished himself from his childhood by great devotion to Mary, and by the practice of all the virtues of his age. Having been placed, when only nine years old, at an excellent school, he soon became the model of all his little companions. He loved Mary with all his heart, and when he had any favour to ask of her, he, with charming simplicity, would address a letter to her with this inscription: "To my good Mother in heaven." This young child was called

into the bosom of his heavenly Father when only eleven years old ; but his memory subsists, and will be preserved for many a year. The sight alone of the objects he made use of, is for his young comrades a silent exhortation. His name has been engraven on the bed he occupied, and permission to sleep in it is granted only to those pupils who deserve it by their good conduct.

Practice.—Avoid carefully every thing offensive to your neighbour.

Ejaculatory Prayer.—Morning Star, pray for us.

TWENTIETH DAY.

THE PRESENCE OF GOD.

God is every where. No one can escape His divine presence; He sees you at home with your parents, at church, at school, in the street, in your own room; no action of your life, no thought of your mind, no affection of your heart, can be hid from His all-seeing eye. Do you often think of this great truth ? If you do not forget it, my child, you will never dare to commit sin in the presence of your God and your Judge..... When Mary had the

happiness of possessing Jesus upon earth, her thoughts and looks were nearly always directed towards her dearly beloved Son. Imitate her, often think of Jesus and Mary, and your heart will accustom itself to love only Jesus and Mary.

Example.

A virtuous young man was sent by his parents into a strange city, and addressed to a person in whom they placed a confidence by no means merited. The young man had only been a few days with his unworthy guide, when the latter sought to drag him into vice. The young christian resisted the seduction with all his might. "What are you afraid of?" said the agent of the spirit of darkness. "You are far away from your parents, they will never know any thing about your conduct; what have you to fear?" The young man's sole reply was to raise his hands to heaven. This expressive gesture produced its effect, and reduced the corrupter to silence.

It is thus, my child, that the presence of God will be your safeguard in the most dangerous circumstances of life.

Practice.—Think of the presence of God several times during the day.

Ejaculatory Prayer.—Virgin most renowned, pray for us.

TWENTY-FIRST DAY.

ON HUMAN RESPECT.

Human respect is a cowardliness unworthy of a christian and a generous heart. Modesty should raise a blush on the forehead of a child; he should blush at vice, and at every thing which stains the soul; but to blush at God, at Mary, at piety, at virtue; to fear and tremble at the call of duty—what baseness! what a disgrace! O Mary, what have I to fear on the part of man, why should I tremble at his ridicule, if you are my protectress? You who never abandoned your divine Son in the midst of the humiliations and outrages of His passion, suffer me not, I beseech of you, to separate myself from Him; never let me be ashamed to declare myself His child and thine, in order that on the Last Judgment Day, He may number me amongst those who have confessed His holy Name upon earth.

Example.

A young soldier who had preserved his piety in spite of all the dangers incident to his profession, one day forgot his beads and his prayer-book which he left in the public room. They were soon perceived, and the opportunity was deemed excellent for getting up a laugh at his expense. Accordingly as soon as he returned, one took his beads and hung them on a stick ; another took the book and all joined in a mock procession. The young soldier performed all his devotional duties as usual, without a blush or a complaint. The next day, they began again ; the day following, likewise, and so on for the space of three weeks. Yet this generous Christian never shewed the least ill temper, never ceased to serve God as he was accustomed to do. His comrades at length became ashamed of persecuting this virtuous young man ; the trial won for him their esteem, and obtained for him great merit in the eyes of God and of the Blessed Virgin.

Practice. Never fear man when you have a duty to perform.

Ejaculatory Prayer. Health of the weak, pray for us.

TWENTY-SECOND DAY.

ON THE END OF MAN.

My child, let us pass the remaining nine days of the month of Mary, in a kind of little retreat, by reflecting in a particular manner on the great truths of religion. First then : for what purpose were you placed in this world ? Do you sometimes ask yourself this question ? Do you reflect upon it seriously ? You were placed in this world to know, love, and serve God : you were placed here to sanctify and save your soul. All the rest is only vanity and deceit, and if your heart becomes attached to foolish things, you expose yourself to the misfortune of losing your soul for ever. Does your conduct prove that you are persuaded of this truth ?

Example.

Mary made it constantly the business of her life to labour for the end for which God had created her. In her parents' house, in that of Nazareth, in Bethlehem, in Egypt, upon Calvary, always humble, recollected, modest, pious, she had but

one view : the glory and love of her divine Son. Child of Mary, walk in the footsteps of your Mother ; appreciate as she did according to their just value, all the perfidious joys and the false enjoyments of the world ; seek and desire one thing only : to love God, and to serve Him faithfully all your days.

Practice. Ask yourself from time to time why you were placed in this world.

Ejaculatory Prayer. Refuge of sinners, pray for us.

TWENTY-THIRD DAY.

ON DEATH.

You have scarcely made your appearance in the world, and yet the word death resounds already in your ears. Yes, my dear child, you will die ; perhaps in a few days, in a few weeks, or a few years ; perhaps you will live to a great age. This matters not. The moment will most certainly come when you must quit this life. And on this moment will your eternity depend. And this moment is absolutely unknown to you.

O my child, endeavour then so to live that you may not be taken by surprise at that dreadful moment. Repeat often

with the greatest fervour the prayer, "Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now, and at the hour of our death." Recite it with confidence: Mary always protects her children in their passage to eternity.

Example.

Saint Stanislas Kostka died on the Feast of the Assumption according to the request he had frequently made to the Blessed Virgin. In his last moments, he still wore his beads around his arm. "Of what use are they to you," said some one to him, "you are no longer able to say them?" "That is true," replied the dying saint, "but they remind me of my good mother." A few moments afterwards, he gave up his soul to God, the 15th of August, at three in the morning, and had the happiness he so ardently desired, that of entering heaven on this great day.

Practice. Think sometimes of death as you are retiring to rest.

Ejaculatory Prayer. Help of Christians, pray for us.

TWENTY-FOURTH DAY.**ON THE PARTICULAR JUDGMENT.**

Scarcely will your soul have left your body ere it will appear before the tribunal of Jesus Christ. There all your thoughts, all your actions, all your desires will be considered, discussed, judged.

You will, besides, my child, have to render an account of all the particular graces you have received ; graces of birth, of baptism, of education ; graces of good advice, of remorse, of sacraments. If you have lived in a virtuous and christian manner, oh ! what joy, what inexpressible happiness will be your lot ! But if you have led a vicious life, if you have neglected the practice of your duties, what a dreadful sentence will be pronounced against you ! Then, my child, Mary can no longer render you any assistance ; ah ! make then good use, while you can, of her powerful protection.

Example.

Belshazzar, who had abandoned himself to all kinds of wickedness and every

excess, saw quite suddenly, while profaning the sacred vessels in a banquet, a terrible hand writing his judgment on the wall, in the following words: I have counted, I have weighed, I have divided. I have counted thy days and they are ended. I have weighed thy actions and they are condemned. I have divided thy kingdom, and I have delivered thee to thy enemies, The following night all this was executed, and Belshazzar being killed appeared before the judgment seat of God.

Practice. When you are tempted to sin, think of the judgments of God.

Ejaculatory Prayer. Comforter of the afflicted, pray for us.

TWENTY-FIFTH DAY.

ON THE GENERAL JUDGMENT.

Besides the particular judgment, there will be at the end of time, a general judgment, in which all the iniquities of sinners will be manifested in the face of heaven and earth. Then the sins of every kind, the most hidden sins, the sins which overwhelm with shame those who commit them, will be known alike to angels and to men.

The damned will curse their fate ; they will regret, but alas ! too late, their abuse of grace, of the mercy of Jesus, of the protection of Mary, and they will be precipitated for ever into an eternal abyss of woe.

Example.

Saint Jerome passed the latter part of his life in the midst of a desert, occupying his time with prayer, meditation, and the practice of the greatest austerities. He had ever before his eyes, the terrible judgments of the Lord. Day and night, he fancied he heard the awful trumpet which was to summons him before the dread tribunal of God ; he detested his sins, he implored mercy, and he entreated the Lord not to judge him according to the rigour of His justice.

Practice. Beg of God, by the intercession of Mary, to spare you in the last day !

Ejaculatory Prayer. Queen of angels, pray for us.

TWENTY-SIXTH DAY.

ON HELL.

Descend for an instant in spirit into hell. O my son, if the love of sin attracts you, most quickly will you discover your error. Behold these avenging flames, listen to the howling of the devils, the groans and the curses of the damned. Unhappy wretches! they have sacrificed their soul for some short-lived enjoyments; they have lost all; and the only fruit of their sins, their joys, their riches, is rage, despair, inexpressible anguish, and devils for their companions everlastingly.

Example.

Young Louis Beauvais, seeing his mother add fuel to an immense coal-fire, asked her if the fire of hell were as horrible as the one he saw before him. "Alas! my dear son," said she, "the fire you see is nothing compared with that of hell." "Great God! if I were so unhappy as to go there," exclaimed the child, pale with fright. "Hell is not for every-

body," replied the mother ; " it is only for those who do not love God. As for you, you will certainly not go there if you are good."

Practice. Often call to mind the saying of Saint Bernard, that a true servant of Mary was never known to perish.

Ejaculatory Prayer. Queen of Patriarchs, pray for us.

TWENTY-SEVENTH DAY.

ON THE ETERNITY OF THE TORMENTS OF HELL.

How dreadful is any evil which is never to have an end. Never ! Try and understand this word, my child. Never ! Days, months, years, centuries, thousands of ages, millions of ages, will pass away, and eternity will still be as though it were only just beginning. You are sometimes condemned at school to place yourself on your knees when you have been wanting in your duty ; this is not a very heavy punishment, but if it were to last a whole day, a whole year, all your life, what a torture ! O ! if men thought of eternity ! Always to burn, always to lament, always to despair ! always to be separated from Jesus and Mary, from

that divine Saviour who has been so prodigal of His graces towards us ; from that good and blessed Virgin Mary who has loved us so much. What a dreadful fate !

Example.

Two virtuous women were, during the first persecutions of the Church, arrested because they were Christians. The judge, when he caused them to appear before him, said to one of them : “ You see this fire, and these instruments of torture : if you wish to avoid death, renounce your religion.” “ I only fear,” replied this generous Christian, “ the torments which are eternal, and the fire that will never be extinguished.” The judge, still more irritated, caused her to be beaten with rods, and then thrown into the flames. “ You see,” said he then to her companion, “ what torments await those who refuse to obey my orders.” “ I only fear,” replied the holy woman, “ the eternal fire of hell ; and it is in order not to suffer therein, that I adore the true God, and Jesus Christ His Son.” She also received the crown of martyrdom.

Practice. When you have any thing to suffer, think of the torments of the damned.

Ejaculatory Prayer. Queen of Martyrs, pray for us.

TWENTY-EIGHTH DAY.

ON PARADISE.

O Mary ! we now return to speak of you, our good Mother ; we are about to talk of Paradise, where you reign with your divine Son—of the land, overflowing with inexpressible delights, in which the soul, united to its God, enjoys a felicity impossible to express or conceive.

O Queen of angels, of virgins, of all saints, how enchanting the thought that I shall one day go to heaven, there to receive the crown of the elect, there to be numbered among the just and the blessed ! What sacrifice, here below, can I find difficult if thereby I am able to purchase so great a happiness ? No, Mary, I will think nothing too difficult in the service of a God infinitely good, who promises such magnificent rewards. Second my endeavours, protect and direct me in order that you may introduce me yourself into the holy tabernacle, and

that you may present me as one of your children to your beloved Son.

Example.

Saint Augustine often spoke of heaven to his flock, and he did so with an energy and fervour which caused the sentiments of his own soul to pass into those of his hearers. One day he said to them : " I will suppose that God were to promise you should live a hundred, a thousand years, in the full enjoyment of all abundance and happiness ; but on condition that you should never reign with Him." A general cry interrupted him immediately with, " Let all be taken from us ! we wish only for God, for heaven, for paradise."

Practice. Think of the happiness of the Saints when you look up to heaven.

Ejaculatory Prayer. Queen of virgins, pray for us.

TWENTY-NINTH DAY.

ON A HAPPY ETERNITY.

And this felicity, my child, will last for ever ! The faithful soul in paradise is certain of being happy for all eternity.

Free from every alarm, inundated with a torrent of delights, lost in the immensity of the goodness, the beauty, the loveliness of its God ; enjoying the society of the incomparable Mary, of the glorious Saint Joseph, of all the angels, of all the saints ; joining in the concerts of the seraphim and cherubim ; throughout all ages, beyond all ages, during a whole eternity ! Happiness of heaven. O happiness of heaven ! when shall our hearts understand thee ?

Example.

Young Raphael Emmerson, who was a model of piety and resignation, always showed a serene and tranquil countenance even in the midst of the greatest sufferings ; the thought of God, of His infinite goodness, of His ineffable rewards, filled his soul with joy. Having warned him of his approaching end, knowing his virtue, the person added : “ Well, my child, are you not afraid of death ? Your body will be deprived of all motion, it will be lifeless.” “ But,” replied the amiable child, “ have you not told me that my soul will be in heaven, and that it will see God ? How, then, can I fear to die ? ”

Practice. Often beg of Mary to obtain for you the grace to dwell with her in heaven.

Ejaculatory Prayer. Queen of all Saints, pray for us.

THIRTIETH DAY.

ON PERSEVERANCE.

Mary never ceased for one instant of her life to give us examples of virtue and holiness. My child, walk in the footsteps of your Mother ; she shews you the way to heaven ; follow this road with her without ever turning aside, without looking back. You will hear voices soliciting you to quit the service of our Lord ; if you were to listen to them, my child, if you dare to cast off the sweet yoke of Jesus, you will destroy the work of your salvation which is so happily begun. Should you live twenty, forty, sixty, years, never forget that the crown is granted only to him who *perseveres unto the end*.

Example.

Charles Clarentin lived on earth the life of an angel.

During the long and painful illness which preceded his death, he was assailed by violent temptations; but he had recourse to Mary, and he caused her picture to be placed at the foot of his bed, in order to excite his confidence in her powerful intercession. He repeated with inexpressible fervour: "In Thee, O Lord, have I hoped; I shall not be confounded for ever." He added: "I hope also in you, O Mary, my good sovereign! Oh! what lovely things I see," exclaimed he, all at once; "what lovely things I see!" And his eyes were raised to heaven, and bathed in tears of divine love; then taking the crucifix in his trembling hands, he fell asleep in the Lord while pronouncing these words: "Father, into Thy hands I commend my spirit."

Practice. Rise again immediately, whenever you have the misfortune to commit a fault.

Ejaculatory Prayer. Holy Virgin of virgins, pray for us.

THIRTY-FIRST DAY.

THE NOSEGAY FOR MARY.

O Mary, O my good Mother, look, I

beseech of you, upon my heart as upon a garden, the cultivation of which is confided to your care. Sow therein all the virtues most agreeable to you, and cause them to spring up. May holy innocence, humility, meekness, obedience, and piety, embalm it with their delightful fragrance! May your maternal hand, O Mary, root up the weeds of vice, and every plant displeasing in your eyes. Plant, water, prune, in order that your beloved Son, Jesus, may behold with complacency a heart adorned by His holy Mother; and may there arise daily, towards your throne, from these heavenly flowers of virtue, sweet exhalations and delicious perfumes, in testimony of my gratitude and love.

Prayer.

Remember, O most gracious Virgin Mary, that no one ever had recourse to your protection, implored your help, or sought your mediation, without obtaining relief. Confiding, therefore, in your goodness, behold me, a penitent sinner, sighing out my sins before you, beseeching you to adopt me for your child, and to take upon you the care of my eternal salvation.

Despise not, O Mother of Jesus, the petition of your unworthy client ; but hear and grant my prayer.

Practice. Renew every Saturday your consecration to Mary.

Ejaculatory Prayer. Mary, conceived without sin, pray for us.

THE END.



RICHARDSON AND SON, DERBY.







